

PRIMARY RECORD

*P1. Resource Name or #: Plaza Hotel (UPDATE)

Page 1 of 11 Other Identifier: Zanetta House; CHL #180; San Juan Bautista State Historic Park

DRAFT

*P2. Location: Unrestricted

*a. County San Benito

b. USGS 7.5' Quad _____ Date _____ T ; R 西 南 東 北 ; _____ B.M.

c. Address Second Street at Mariposa City San Juan Bautista Zip 95045

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc.,) 36.845140, -121.536130

*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries):

The Plaza Hotel is a rectangular, two-story adobe brick and wood building. A wood-framed veranda wraps entirely around the first story. A wood-framed addition was constructed as the second story prior to 1856 by the hotel's fourth owner, Angelo Zanetta, and features a second floor balcony that encompasses the whole building. The low-pitched, hipped roof overhangs the balcony. A chimney projects from the roof at the east end. The double-hung six-over-six windows of both levels sit flush with the exterior walls, with plain surrounds and projecting sills. Traditional styled double doors provide access to each facade on both levels.

Character-Defining Features

The Monterey-Colonial style of architecture was first observed in the Larkin House, constructed in 1835 by Thomas O. Larkin. Not an architect by trade, but a builder by entrepreneurship. Larkin is known as the father of the Monterey-Colonial style as many of the style's elements are a direct result of his own regional and personal experiences. After having lived in both New England and the South, he would have been well versed in the aesthetics of these regions: formal symmetrical façades, classical details, red brick, clapboards, hipped roofs, and two-story piazzas.

The verandas of Monterey-Colonial style had Spanish roots, as well. Town planning in Spanish colonies was dictated by the 1573 Laws of the Indies, in which it was required all buildings be placed around a town square and constructed with arcades to provide public shelter and communal cohesiveness. These arcades often extended to multiple stories and were cantilevered along upper balconies, as seen in Monterey Colonial style.

Adobe bricks were made from local soil with the following ingredients: coarse aggregate for stability, fine aggregate as filler, silt to act as a binding agent, and clay as a plastic medium. This was then combined with water, and an organic ingredient such as straw or grass. Mortar used to reinforce adobe walls consisted of the same type of mud used in forming adobe bricks but was combined with shards of tile or pottery. Adobe wall thickness tapered on upper stories. A rough foundation in the form of brick, fieldstone, or cavity wall footings filled with rubble stone, tile fragments, or seashells prevented the adobe brick from dissolving from the ground's moisture. Mud or lime plaster top coat used to treat and protect the surface of adobe walls was applied in two coats.

An increased use of redwood, that included timbering supports and wood flooring, facilitated a new ability to add height to buildings and construct beyond the traditional one and two story levels of adobes. Wood did not become popular in adobe buildings until the Anglo influence arrived in California. These supports were put together much like traditional timber framing found on the East Coast. Horizontal and vertical pieces were joined with spikes and pegs to create a sturdier frame. This framework was easily visible on the interior of such buildings.

(SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS)

P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes)

*P4. Resources Present: one building and associated landscape features

P5. Photos: see page 9

*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source: Historic: Between 1792 and 1856/California Historical Landmark Nomination, March 1935

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P3a. Description (continued)

The following materials and building characteristics are typical of Monterey Colonial style architecture and seen in the Plaza Hotel:

- Two stories
- Symmetrical façade similar to Georgian style architecture
- Two story double veranda which spans the length of the façade
- Hipped roof configuration with side-facing gables
- Tiled roof
- Scored exterior plaster
- Large, double-hung, six-over-six window sashes surrounded with hoods, skirts, and fluted surrounds that lay flush to the wall
- Narrow, wood-paneled double doors
- Kitchen space incorporated into main building

Location

The Plaza Hotel is located along El Camino Real across the plaza from the San Juan Bautista Mission founded by Father Junipero Serra in 1797. One of the first buildings in the town of San Juan Bautista, the hotel is situated in the northwest corner at the intersection of 2nd and Mariposa Streets and faces directly northward onto the original plaza. The whole of the block bounded by 2nd, 3rd, Washington, and Mariposa is owned by the State of California, and administered by the Department of Parks and Recreation as part of the San Juan Bautista State Historic Park. The area of the site is approximately one acre.

Historic Integrity

San Juan Bautista became hugely successful economically between 1850 and the 1930s. The town became the center of a burgeoning hide and tallow trade, as well as the mining industry once gold and silver were discovered in the Sierras. Situated between San Francisco and Los Angeles, San Juan Bautista was a major stopping point for travelers and supplied the neighboring towns of Monterey, Santa Cruz, Watsonville, and Hollister. The Plaza Hotel, rebuilt in 1856 around the Plaza and directly adjacent to the Castro-Breen Adobe, was one of three buildings constructed during this period intended to meet the needs of the growing population and business.

The Plaza Hotel originally was a one-story adobe, built in 1792 to house those who labored to build the San Juan Bautista Mission and to serve as a barracks for the Spanish soldiers. After the departure of General Castro and his Mexican soldiers in 1846 following Mexico's defeat after the Mexican American War, it was used as the home of the Anzar family. Later it was leased to a merchandise firm and then sold to Angelo Zanetta, an Italian immigrant and talented chef. Zanetta removed the roof of the original adobe and added a second story of timber. He had verandas built front and rear as well as porches at the first floor. The general appearance is similar to that of the Castro-Breen Adobe. He opened the Plaza Hotel on June 24, 1856 amid a lavish weeklong gala.¹ The Plaza Hotel became noted for its fine cuisine and liquors. It became the headquarters for the overland stage and a favorite stopping place for fiesta guests, traders, and travelers. Local lore says that several historic figures stayed at the hotel, including John Jacob Astor, Bayard Taylor, and Generals Grant, Sheridan, and Sherman.

California State Parks' purchase of the property in 1933 allowed for extensive renovations and preservation efforts ever since. The significant site characteristics reflected in the integrity of the Plaza Hotel include: the original placement of the building within the spatial layout of the San Juan Bautista plaza, the use of vernacular style adobe construction and available regional materials used to construct the property, the unity of visual elements around the focal points of the building's acreage, and the dynamic continuity through time of the hotel

¹ This opening date was referenced in Christian Ecklon's 1939 WPA project, "The Plaza at San Juan Bautista: A State Historic Monument, San Benito County." Subsequent sources date the opening between 1858 and January 1859. Further research is required to determine accurate date.

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among its neighboring historic resources built in the same period and style within the vicinity of the plaza, all of which, when combined, provide a clear physical expression of feeling and association for the properties integrity as a distinct and intact representative of both itself, and other long-gone early Mexican California adobes. Since the first adobes in the area were constructed, modifications to all related resources within the plaza have occurred. These contribute to the character and integrity of the historic landscape of the plaza in San Juan Bautista. Many of the alterations made contribute to the hotel's overall integrity because of their own historical significance and association with historic persons and events.

In summary, modifications associated with the development of the historic property have taken place on the original structure of the adobe during its period of significance as a historic resource. Most of these changes reflect the evolution of the historic landscape in the area and have become a part of the contributing landscape features of the district. For the most part, modifications to the adobe have been additive rather than subtractive to the basic historic elements and character. Renovations conducted by Zanetta were done with compatible materials that retain their own integrity and significance. California State Parks has additionally restored historic elements of the building per the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

In general there is little that is significantly different since the building's last major renovation prior to the 1930s. The hotel remains largely intact as to materials, feeling, and landscape. All alterations made occurred prior to 1933 and do not impact the building's period of significance, which is 1792 to 1933. The Plaza Hotel as it exists today is a remarkably authentic representation of the Monterey Colonial vernacular style and layout as it existed in 1835, even taking into account the addition of the wooden second story in 1856. This adobe and the others that comprise the San Juan Bautista plaza remain less modified than many significant urban residential properties and historic Main Street examples.

The hotel has excellent integrity and still retains its basic scale, appearance, construction materials, and location in conjunction with other structures that comprise the plaza. In addition to the building and its surrounding property, landscape elements such as other buildings of similar tone and age along the town's main street, planted and natural vegetation, and roadways are all important character defining features of the plaza and cultural landscape as a whole of which the hotel contributes.

***P7. Owner and Address:**

Mathew L. Fuzie, District Superintendent
California State Parks, Monterey District
2211 Garden Road, Monterey, CA 93940-5317

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)

Content from original California Historical Landmark nomination, National Register of Historic Places nomination, historic structure studies, project monitoring reports, restoration project drawings, and California State Parks Plans and Environmental Impact Reports consolidated, edited, and formatted for DPR 523 forms by California State Office of Historic Preservation, 1725 23rd Street, Suite 100, Sacramento, CA 95816-7100.

***P9. Date Recorded:** 1935, 2014

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe) California Historical Landmark

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.")

See B12. References

***Attachments:**

Location Maps Continuation Sheets Building, Structure, and Object Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

Page 4 of 11 *NRHP Status Code 1 *Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Plaza Hotel (UPDATE)

- B1. Historic Name: Plaza Hotel
B2. Common Name: Plaza Hotel
B3. Original Use: residence/hotel
B4. Present Use: museum
*B5. Architectural Style: Spanish Colonial/Monterey Colonial
*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) Constructed between 1792 and 1856; alterations include 1856 removal of original roof from one-story adobe and addition of timber second story.
*B7. Moved? No Date: N/A Original Location: N/A
*B8. Related Features: N/A
B9a./b. Architect/builder: Unknown, 1856 alterations by Angelo Zanetta
*B10. Significance: Theme Early California Settlement Area Central California
Period of Significance 1792 - 1933 Property Type Building
Applicable Criteria CHL-2, Association with Early California Settlement.
CHL-3: Prototype of Monterey Colonial style

Summary

The Plaza Hotel is a distinct example of pioneer architecture and construction style that has predominantly retained its original features since its second floor expansion in the 1850s. As the property served for many years as a popular hotel destination, the building was protected from extreme alternation and/or demolition. The Plaza Hotel is eligible as a California Historical Landmark under criterion CHL-3 as a prototype of a period, style, architectural movement or construction in northern California, using combined Eastern and Western building methods first produced in Monterey as the Monterey Colonial architectural style. The property retains a high degree of historical integrity. Additionally, the Plaza Hotel is eligible under California Historical Landmark criterion CHL-2 for its association with an individual or group having a profound influence on the history of California, because of its status as a site associated with the California Missions. It is also an intact site representative of the settlement of Mexican California and the early development of the northern region of the state by immigrants. The hotel is also associated with the early development and settlement of Mexican California, the California Mission system, and El Camino Real, as well as its implementation as a successful small business owned and operated by an Italian immigrant. The hotel's period of significance is 1792 to 1933, the era from the original adobe's construction until its acquisition by the State of California for use as a public park.

Historical Significance

The Plaza Hotel is eligible for listing as a California Historic Landmark as a prototype or an outstanding example of a period, style, architectural movement or construction method. The hotel is a unique example of Monterey Colonial architecture located in a region outside of the Monterey capital. As an adobe and later wood building constructed between 1792 and 1856, the building contributes to the narrative of early California's architectural development through its striking mud block construction, and its timber-frame and adobe shell. The hotel retains its own special architectural style while conforming to the stylistic prototype of the Larkin House in Monterey, in its horizontal massing, and upper level full length porch which extends the entire perimeter of the second story. Although altered from its original adobe form, the only known addition to the building is the 1856 second story addition. These alterations have occurred to the main body of the building and date from a period that has developed its own historic significance. They do not detract from the adobe's original significance or integrity and instead add a second layer of historical significance to the building as a whole.

The San Juan Bautista State Historic Park was designated in 1935 and declared a National Historic Landmark in order to protect and preserve San Juan Bautista's basic characteristics and to maintain the scale and character of its contributing resources. The district was found to possess a significant concentration of buildings that together create an area of architectural and environmental uniqueness and importance which contributes to the overall history and ambiance of San Juan Bautista. Important characteristics include: the rich history of San Juan Bautista as a Mission site and headquarters for administration and productivity in early California, its variety of represented periods within California's history, and the dynamic continuity throughout time of the district itself.

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B10. Significance (continued)

The district's period of significance is 1800-1935. Many of the buildings currently listed as contributors to the district were constructed in the mid-1800s and include the San Juan Bautista Mission Church (1803-1813), the Castro-Breen Adobe (1840-1841), the Plaza Hotel (1858),² the Plaza Stables (1861), and the Zanetta House/Plaza Hall (1868). These restored historic buildings are open to the public with historically interpreted interior spaces. As both a nationally registered historic district and a California State Historical Landmark, the San Juan Bautista State Historic Park represents one of the nation's most significant groups of publicly accessible Monterey Colonial style architecture.

Synopsis of Local History

San Juan Bautista was founded as the fifteenth Mission along the El Camino Real by Padre Fermin Francisco de Lasuen on June 24, 1797. The location was chosen based on its proximity to the Mutsun, a large American Indian tribe that were first to call San Juan Baustista their home, and to Missions Santa Clara and Carmel. The area chosen was also rich in natural resources and building materials.

Many of the Natives already living in the area were eventually baptized and employed by the Mission, at one point increasing the community's numbers to 1,200. As the population increased and the settlement surrounding the Mission grew, the church was expanded to accommodate its congregation in 1803, and despite damage from multiple earthquakes, has been in continuous used since 1812. The building is still owned and used by the Catholic Church and not technically a part of San Juan Bautista State Historic Park.

During Mexico's war for independence with Spain, the adobe became a barracks for Spanish soldiers. Secularization of the Missions in 1834 brought in a Mexican military presence in the area and the adobe again served as an army barracks. After Mexico's defeat and the departure of Mexican officials in 1846, the adobe became a private residence and was sold to Angelo Zanetta who opened it as the two-story Plaza Hotel on June 24, 1856. Shortly after it opened, an individual by the name of John Comfort invested a half interest in the business.

The hotel was a great success from the beginning and became known as one of the most popular hostelrys in California. There was no other route except for the difficult to travel Tejon Pass. The population in California at the time was quite mobile and San Juan Bautista enjoyed a constant flow of people searching for a place to settle and miners looking for more productive gold fields. The Plaza Hotel was known for its lavish fiestas and constantly drew large crowds.

In 1861 San Juan Bautista became the headquarters for the Overland Stage and within six years became the depot for seven stage lines. The Plaza Hotel was the official stopping point and contained eighteen furnished rooms for guests. Two or three stage drivers remained in readiness to operate an extra stage when heavy traffic created a demand. When the Idrina quicksilver mines opened just to the southeast, even more patrons frequented the hotel. The advent of the railroad slowed patronage of the Plaza Hotel, as it discontinued the stagecoach line and bypassed San Juan Bautista. Though business decreased, the hotel maintained a healthy trade and remained open until 1933 when it was purchased by the State of California.

Community as Cultural Value

Community values combine with the Plaza Hotel's historic, natural, and educational value to create a truly unique and treasured place that visitors and residents want to enjoy and protect. The hotel and its surrounding area have experienced six different kinds of community across the years: Native Americans, Mission founders, Spanish, then Mexican soldiers, Anglo Zanetta, and his hotel patrons.

² Further research is required to confirm or adjust date, per earlier reference to 1856.

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The Plaza Hotel's evolving community is an expression of the rich history associated with early California history and development. Before Mexican missionaries came to California, for thousands of years the San Juan Bautista region was home to the Mutsun Indians whose village sat just east of the town proper today. The Mutsun people were known for their beehive-shaped huts made of willow and coarse grasses. Men were hunters and made spear points and arrowheads from chert and obsidian, while women gathered acorns, berries, and seeds that they ground using stone mortars. They were also known for their incredible basket weaving skills. These natives were responsible for construction of the San Juan Bautista Mission and were likely housed in the first floor adobe of what would become the Plaza Hotel.

As the fifteenth Mission to be erected along the El Camino Real, Mission San Juan Bautista was founded by Father President Fermin Francisco de Lasuen and missionaries Fathers Pedro Martinez and Jose Martiarena. Father Felipe del Arroyo de la Cuesta served as padre for 25 years despite a crippling long-term illness and was described on many accounts as a wonderfully generous, multi-talented man. The present-day church was dedicated on June 23, 1812 and replaced a much smaller adobe chapel of 1797-1798 built by Ygnacio Barrera, Second Carpenter of the frigate Concepcion. The main altar screen of 1818 remains largely unrestored and still sits at the front of the Mission church, as does its original pulpit and sounding board. The Mission also acquired and continues to house the largest collection of apostolate paintings in the Mission chain. Though the Mission was secularized in 1835, it was returned to its status as a Catholic church in 1859 by President James Buchanan. Now run by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Monterey, the church has been considered active since 1797.

The original adobe became an army barracks when it housed Spanish soldiers during Mexico's war with Spain for independence and again for Mexican soldiers during the Mexican American War. Mexico lost California and other territories to the United States in 1846. The Treaty of Cahuenga allowed Mexican citizens to remain in California and retain their land so long as they swore U.S. allegiance and obeyed domestic laws. Because of this, the adobe was sold to the Anzar family and then to Angelo Zanetta.

The hotel served as the setting for a number of fiestas and other celebrations that were culturally significant for the settlers of early California and development of the state. On such feast days, nearby ranchers and visitors alike gathered within the Plaza. A band played from the veranda of the hotel where women of all nationalities were encouraged to gather. The crowd would watch various events throughout the day including displays of horsemanship, bullfighting, and bear baiting. The hotel served as a site of Mexican American cultural significance.

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) N/A

***B12. References:**

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B13. Remarks: N/A

*B14. **Evaluator:** Ann Roberts, California State University-Sacramento Public History intern for California State Office of Historic Preservation

*Date of Evaluation: January - March 2014

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Plaza Hotel, San Juan Bautista Historic Park, 1934. Source: CHL #0180 nomination file.

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Plaza Hotel, San Juan Bautista Historic Park, 1979. Source: CHL #0180 nomination file.

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Plaza Hotel, San Juan Bautista Historic Park.

Source: San Juan Bautista SHP Images http://www.parks.ca.gov/MediaGallery/?page_id=563